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SCHOOL ROOM CLASSICS

VI.

THE

New Education.

MEIKLEJOHN.

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SCHOOL-ROOM CLASSICS. VI.

The New Education

BY

PROF. MEIKLEJOHN,

St. Andrews, Scotland.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.:
C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER,
1881.

THE NEW EDUCATION.

Mr. James Boswell was in the habit of starting intellectual game for his great guide, philosopher, and friend—Dr. Johnson—to run down: of asking all kinds of questions on things in heaven and things on earth; of proposing all kinds of problems, both possible and impossible. Perhaps one of the most remarkable questions he ever started—one of the most difficult problems he ever proposed—was one which relates to the bringing up of a new-born baby. Boswell, a man not without insight, and with a firm belief in the far-seeingness of his oracle, gives us the following:—"I know not how so whimsical a thought came into my mind, but I asked, 'If Sir, you were shut up in a castle, and a new-born child with you, what would you do?' Johnson: 'Why, Sir, I should not much like my company.' Boswell: 'But would you take the trouble of rearing it? He seemed, as may well be supposed, unwilling to pursue the subject; but, upon my persevering in my question, replied, 'Why,

yes, Sir, I would ; but I must have all conveniences. If I had no garden, I would make a shed on the roof, and take it there for fresh air. I should feed it, and wash it much, and with warm water to please it—not with cold water to give it pain.’

Boswell : ‘But, Sir, does not heat relax?’

Johnson : ‘Sir, you are not to imagine the water is to be very hot. I would not Coddle the child. No, Sir, the hardy method

of treating children does no good. I’ll take you five children from London who shall cuff five Highland children. Sir, a man bred in London will carry a burden, or run, or wrestle, as well as a man brought up in the hardiest manner in the country.’

Boswell : ‘Good living, I suppose, makes the Londoners strong.’

Johnson : ‘Why Sir, I don’t know that it does. Our chairmen from Ireland, who are as strong men as any, have been brought up upon potatoes. Quantity makes up for quality.’

Boswell : ‘Would you teach this child that I have furnished you with anything?’

Johnson : ‘No I should not be apt to teach it.’

Boswell : ‘Would not you have a pleasure in teaching it?’

Johnson : ‘No, Sir, I should NOT have a pleasure in teaching it.’

Boswell : ‘Have you not a pleasure in teaching men? THERE, I have you. You have the same pleasure in teaching men that I should have in teaching chil-

dren.' Johnson: 'Why, something about that.'"

Now, the difficulty in which Dr. Johnson found himself, is the standing difficulty of the English nation. In spite of all that has been spoken and written about it, we do not yet know how to educate young children; and the problem increases in difficulty as we go backwards towards the beginning of life. How to train a child to healthy activity, to self-help, to a harmonious development of its powers of body and mind—is still a problem which waits for solution. A solution—or even the materials for a solution—we shall welcome from anywhere. An attempt at a solution comes to us from Germany; it has made many disciples and warm adherents in Germany, England, France, and the United States; and it has been so much of a revelation to many of its disciples that they have given to it the name of the NEW EDUCATION. Englishmen need not find fault with the term *new*. Civilization has had to fight for thousands of years for its very existence. It had to learn the arts of agriculture, of war, of law, and of medicine before it could give some of its hard-earned leisure to the work of training up its young children. It is only since 1870 that the work of instruction has even begun to take a national shape. Besides, many

of the very oldest things England has are called *new*. There is the oldest forest in the country—the *New Forest*; there is *New College*—one of the oldest colleges in Oxford; and the fifty oldest streets in London are all called *New Street*. The point about our education is not as to whether it may or may not rightly be called *new*, but as to the solidity of its foundation. Does it dig down deep enough in human nature, and is it based on the solid rock of eternal truth?

Froebel, a thoughtful and slow-meditating German, is the founder of this new education. Let us see how he faced the problem, and how he tried to find an answer for it. He saw the child come into life. When he begins to be able to run about, not much attention is paid to him, and he is left pretty much to himself. He gets into what is called mischief; and then he is checked. He is hardly guided into the right way at all; and, as dirt is only matter in the wrong place, so his mischief is only activity invested in the wrong objects.—If he is the child of rich parents, he is overwhelmed with cartloads of toys; and the only activity which they call forth, or can call forth, in him, is the activity of breaking them up as rapidly as possible. Then he wants more, and he gets them. Thus there is implanted and

fostered in his mind a desire for immediate pleasure, which must be gratified at any cost; but no true power of his own has been called into pleasurable activity. If he is the child of poor parents, he is much more fortunate, for then he is very soon set to work to *do* something, and he finds himself a useful and important member of the body corporate called the family. If he lives in the country, he forms an acquaintance with trees and plants, with birds and beasts; and his eyes and soul have some chance of opening. But there are no natural joinings on to his school-life, which is soon to come; his days are joined each to each by the "natural impiety" of association with—it may be the rougher—among his school-fellows; his school-days are an artificial intercalation between his infancy and his manhood; and no one can say that the best has been done for him, or has been made of him. His parents do not know what is going on in his mind; and, for all they can tell, he may turn out well, or he he may turn out very ill. Now, Froebel asked himself the question, "What are the living powers—what are the germ-points which exist in the minds of children, and how can I provide for them a soil and a sunshine which shall give them opportunities of kindly growth?"

There is external nature, and her infinite varieties of life, form, color, motion, change and growth. There is human society—a higher kind of nature, but still a nature—with its various kinds of pleasures and pursuits, some healthy and beneficial, others deadly and pernicious. How shall I so train him—first to action, then to knowledge, and then to religion—that he shall eagerly and joyfully seize the good, and shun what is hurtful to the growth of his soul and body?

Froebel spent his life in feeling and groping after answers to these questions. He did not rashly take up with some clever *fad*—with some ingenious nostrum—and then sing the praises of that as the help and the cure for all the ills in our world of education. “Empiric physicians,” says Lord Bacon, “commonly have a few pleasing receipts, whereupon they are confident and adventurous; but they know neither the causes of the diseases, nor the constituents of patients, nor the true method of cures.” But Froebel was determined to know the causes of things, to understand the nature of children, and to find out what remedies could be found for the great deficiencies in early education.

To understand what the nature of his own experience was, let us take a glance at his life and the nature of his own education.

Frederick Froebel was born in the village of Oberweissbach, in the Thuringian Forest, in the year 1782. His father was the clergyman of the parish. His mother died when he was only nine months old. His father's parish contained some seven villages, and about five thousand souls; and thus he had little time to look after his own children. When young Froebel was between three and four years of age, his father married again; and his step-mother showed herself at first in a kindly enough light to him. But when she came to have a son of her own, her affection seemed to become entirely absorbed in her own child, and instead of the old friendly and familiar *thou*, the small growing child found himself always addressed in the cold and distant third person, as *he*. "This," he said, "made me feel utterly isolated and alone; an impassable chasm had come between us two." When a noble mind is in sorrow, its sorrow is not quite thrown away. It has this use—that the sufferer makes a silent inward vow that he will do all he can to save others from the pain he is feeling, from the misery he has to bear. In his eleventh year, Mr. Hoffman, his uncle by his mother's side, came to pay his father a visit. He had lately lost his only son, and his heart went out to the child of his dead sister. The lad

went back with his uncle; was sent to a boys' school in Stadt-Ilm, and grew daily stronger both in mind and in body; and with strength the cheerfulness and joy of boyhood came back to him again. He showed no special power at school, except in the subject of arithmetic; but he was never tired of being out of doors, and watching the habits of animals and plants. He made strong friends at school also; and it is in these two experiences and habits—his love of nature and his love of society—that we discover the sources of two of his strongest opinions regarding the education of young children. The odds and ends of grammar, geography, and geometry that he picked up at school, seemed to him without root and without aim; and it was in vain that he looked to the so-called geography of the school for an interpretation of the phenomena he saw in nature—all that kind of geography seemed to him to be in the "air."

In the year 1797, he was apprenticed to the profession of Forester. He did not learn much under his master, and, in 1799, he returned to his father's house. He felt his deficiencies in mathematics and in botany, and declined the offer of his master to stay another year.

Frederick's brother was studying medicine at the University of Jena; he wanted

some money, urgency was voted, and Frederick was sent off with it. There the hard-working, thoughtful university life of the students attracted him with irresistible power, and he asked and obtained from his father leave to stay at the University. He attended classes in Mathematics, Mineralogy, Botany, Natural History, Natural Philosophy, and Chemistry; and in this wonderful new life was as happy as a young and eager student could be. In the second year of his studies he found himself in a considerable scrape. He had lent half his allowance to his brother—a loan which his brother found himself, when called upon, unable to repay. He was in debt more than £4 to his landlord; and both his father and guardian declined to advance the money. He was thrown into the University prison, where he lay for nine weeks, weeks which he devoted chiefly to the study of Latin, in which he felt himself rather deficient. His step-mother daily embittered the heart of his father against him, spoke of him as a *ne'er-do-weel* and the black sheep of the family; and he was not relieved from prison until he had foregone his claim to a share in the paternal inheritance. “With heavy heart, troubled mind, and down-pressed spirit,” he says, “I returned once more to my father’s home at

the age of nineteen." He was a lazy, good-for-nothing lad, eager to sponge upon his father, his step-mother held; and she at length got his father to entertain the same opinion. It pained the young man with the sharpest pain that his father did not understand him in the least, while his father, on his side, was full of anxiety about the future. The strong man had become old; he fell into ill health, took to bed, and at length died in the beginning of 1802. "May his spirit," says the son, "look down upon me now as I write this—look down in calmness and with blessing; and may he now feel satisfied with the son who always bore for him so strong a love."

Froebel was now free. He received employment in a land-surveyor's office in the neighborhood of Bamberg; and in the year 1804 we find him acting as private secretary to a Government official. In 1805 he went to Frankfort, in the hope of finding a place in the office of an architect. An accident—what seemed to be an accident—turned the whole course of his life. All his certificates were lost; and his hope of obtaining a situation was gone with them. Gruner, the director of the Normal School in Frankfort, had, before this was known, offered him a vacant post in his college, and Froebel

now accepted it with pleasure. In a letter to his brother, he says, "I feel as if I had at last found the true element of my life; and I am as happy as a fish in the water, as a bird in the air."

The greatest name in education at that time was Pestalozzi, who had settled at Yverdun, on the banks of Lake Neuchatel. Froebel resolved to give up one of his vacations to visit Pestalozzi in Switzerland. What he saw there both raised and depressed him, excited and almost stunned him. Some good working ideas he carried back from his visit; and for two years he worked with great and well-recognized success at Frankfort. "His class became the model class of the model school." He felt, however, the need of greater knowledge of his own, and of more time for study; and he accordingly resigned his position. His wish was to return to the University; but he was soon after prevailed upon to undertake the charge of the three sons of a Mr. von Holzhausen. He carried them off with him to Pestalozzi at Yverdun, and there became teacher and scholar, educator and pupil, at the same time. But he quickly found that, however excellent the educational ideas of Pestalozzi might be, the way in which they were carried out was singularly deficient in business-like

plan and purpose, and hence in truly beneficial result. He carried his pupils back to their father's house, and he himself went off to study at the University of Gottingen. Here he gave himself up to the study of Philology, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and Mineralogy. This was in 1811; and the year after he entered the University of Berlin. The feeling that he had a mission—that there was a work before him that he and no one else could do—was a living force in him, and guided, though unconsciously, his seemingly erratic movements. At the same time, he believed that, to make himself ready for the high and difficult task of the teacher, he must see many kinds of life, and work hard at different departments of human knowledge. Unknown to himself, there steadily and quietly burned within his mind the unspoken question, What are the best and most varied kinds of mental food for the growing souls of little children?

In 1813, the great German War broke out. The disasters of the French army in Russia seemed to be Germany's opportunity. The King of Prussia issued a proclamation "To my People," and all good Germans rushed to arms. Then, for the first time, did the consciousness of Germany's being a nation—not merely a geographical expression—dawn upon

the Germans themselves, a consciousness which attained its full expression in 1871 in the palace of Versailles. Froebel, though no Prussian, joined the corps of "The Black Rifles" at Berlin. "It was hardly possible," he says, "for me to conceive how any young man, fit to bear arms, could think of becoming an educator of children whose country he was not willing to defend with his blood or with his life. It was impossible for me to imagine how a young man who then hung back like a coward, could, later on, without deep shame, and without incurring the scorn and derision of his own pupils, stir them to any really great work—to any deed that required exertion or self-sacrifice." In spite, then, of weak health and a delicate constitution, Froebel shouldered his gun, and went out to give battle to the hereditary enemies of his country.

The first night of his campaign he was quartered at Meisson; and here he met two other Berlin students, who afterwards became his colleagues and lifelong friends. In 1815 came the long peace, which was not broken till the Crimean war of 1854. In the end of the year 1816, one of his brothers, a merchant in Westphalia, asked him to take care of and to educate his two little boys of the ages of six and eight. With them he



migrated to the village of Griesheim ; and soon after he had sent to him the three sons of another brother—his brother Christopher, the pastor of the village, who was carried off by a malignant typhoid fever which took its fatal way across Germany after the bloody battle of Leipzig. From this year of 1816 his educational work ran in one course, according to one idea, which gradually became more and more clear to himself. In 1817 he removed his school to Kothen. In 1818 he married a Miss Hoffmeister, a woman with a strong love for Nature and for children, and with high and true ideas about education.

Froebel had to go through much misery. He was constantly on the most intimate and speaking terms with Poverty. Once his school sank to five pupils; and he was also persecuted by fanatics of many kinds. But the deeper and more intense his misery, the bolder and larger were the plans he formed. The oftener he failed in this or in that part of education, the more strongly was he driven back upon the truth—that it is in the early and the earliest periods of education that the battle is lost or won; and that the greatest need of a nation is a race of strong and intelligent mothers. In the year 1837—at the not immature age of 55—he had come

into the full possession of his central thought, and he was worrying his mind for a fit name to give to the institution he was about to found. One day, walking among the hills, he suddenly stopped, his eyes filled with light, and he shouted, "Heureka! *Childs'-Garden*—that is the name for my place." He never had any children of his own; but there never was a human being fonder of children, with a heart more overflowing with love for young human beings.

In this year he began to publish a weekly journal, with the motto—"Come let us live for our children!" It was in this journal that he first explained his *Doctrine of Play*—the nature of the activities of children—his systems of games and occupations. In 1839, he lectured upon his idéas in Dresden, and the Queen of Saxony and her Court were among his hearers. In the year 1843 appeared the fruit of long years of labour, thought, and brooding, "His Songs for Mothers" (*Mutter und Kose-Lieder*). In this book he tried to put his finger upon the young germs (*Keimpunkte*) of the human faculties, and to show how they must be tended and supported.

From this time till 1850 he gave courses of training lectures in different towns in the methods and pursuits of the Kinder-

garten; and in one of these towns he learned to know the great educational thinker and writer, Diesterweg. In the year 1850, the Model Kindergarten was firmly established in a castle, which had been placed at the disposal of Froebel by his friend the Duke of Meiningen, and which became the happy home of thousands of young children, and hundreds of young women who taught, or were learning to teach them. Everything seemed prosperous, and Froebel had reason to believe that his views and his system would take kindly root all over Germany, and be a blessing to the whole nation. But on the 7th of August 1851, the Prussian Minister of Public Instruction published a decree forbidding the establishment of any Kindergarten within the kingdom of Prussia. The Minister thought that Froebel's views had Socialistic tendencies. The smaller States were likely to follow this lead, and Froebel saw with the deepest sorrow this terrible check given to the growth of his ideas. He was nearly seventy, and long toil, acting upon a delicate constitution, had left in him no reserve of strength to react against this terrible blow. He died within two months after his seventieth birthday. He was followed to the grave by hundreds of teachers and pupils, whose lives he had

saved from frivolity and aimlessness, and on his tombstone was placed the simple inscription—"Come! let us live for our children!"

When Edmund Burke was a young man, he wrote an essay on the "Sublime and Beautiful;" and in that essay he enounced one of those educational axioms which are the standing criticisms of our procedure, and the despair of our ambitions. He says: "I am convinced that the method of learning which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation, is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grow—it tends to set the learner himself on the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the investigator has made his own discoveries." This was Froebel's starting point; and he kept in his hand this clue as the guiding clue to all steps. He does not accept the vulgar idea that, when a child's education is to be begun, you must give him a book. He went much further back than that; he raised the previous questions: What is a child? What do we expect him to be and to do? What is the best way of training him for that?

In order to learn his own lessons, Froebel went to nature; he observed the nature

of children. He remembered the maxim of Lord Bacon, that we can learn only from nature herself how to subdue her; and further, that, in this case, we must stoop to conquer. The child lives the life of the senses: I will train his senses. He is fond of action: I will guide and regulate his action.

His first educator is the Mother; and his books are full of guidance both for the souls and for the hands of Mothers. A baby is fond of mischief, and likes to kick out. Very well, then, says Froebel, let the mother teach him how to kick in a rhythmic manner. The mother is shown how to move his legs for and with him, gently and regularly, backwards and forwards; and she is taught to sing a song in time with the movements of the legs. The child likes it, for he feels an addition to his strength; he is not insensible to the music; he feels able to do something—he feels his power, and this makes him feel good. You will say this is not much—to kick rhythmically. No; it is not much, but it is something—it is a beginning. It connects even the baby's kicking with the external order of the world—with the great cosmic harmony; and when we think of the large amount of kicking that goes on in society that is not rhythmical, we might say that it is a good deal. Then

the child is imitative. This power, too, the mother is shown how to take hold of—to make the most of—to make into an instrument for the development of his physical and his mental powers. He is shown how to imitate the pendulum—tick, tock; tick, tock; and to move his arm in perfect time: and here, again, to the accompaniment of a song.

The child loves play; and his love of play and power of playing Froebel regards as the raw material which is supplied by Nature to the educator. He has been accused of mixing up play and work, and of thus spoiling both. Nothing is a more unfair representation of his thoughts. For what is play? It is merely a form of pleasurable activity, which has no end or purpose out of or beyond itself. Very well, said Froebel, I will take this play; and, with the full concurrence—nay, with the joy—of the pupil, I will transform it into grave and serious work. Nay, more; I will transform it into the bond which shall bind the child to society, and make him a helpful and intelligent member of the body corporate.

The power of using the senses—of “noticing”; the desire to imitate; the love of spontaneous activity: Froebel takes hold of these three powers, and employs them to draw out or to educate the soul

and mind of the child. He tries to give to the children a large quantity of well-arranged and thoughtfully-ordered *experience*, instead of verbal formulæ; he puts action in the place of books; and he puts life in the place of mere abstract thinking. Flowers and leaves; animals and plants; rhythmic dance and song; stories and pictures; games and social life—these are his books. He said to himself: If I train the senses and guide the perceptions of the senses, I will have shown the road to all the thoughts that afterwards come out of the observations of the senses.

Now, the training of the senses includes a training to a connected series of observations of color, form, and size; of lines, angles, and figures; of number, and combination; and to this end Froebel devised a set of what he calls GIFTS. He called them *gifts*, I suppose, to set them in marked opposition to what we call *tasks*—a word which is just another form of *taxes*—that is, something laid or imposed on us, as a burden to be borne.

I. The first gift is the ball. The balls are made of bright-colored soft worsted; and Froebel selected this form as the simplest, while it is the most complete, of all forms. He devised many kinds of games and exercises in connection with these balls. They are of different colors,

and each has a string attached to them. The children are shown how to raise, to lower them, to pass them to the left hand, and then back to the right; to pass them to each other; to tell their color; to tell their number; to do this now quickly, now slowly, at the signal of command—at once, exactly, and altogether, like a little regiment. It may be objected at once that this is only drill. Yes; but it is kindly and rhythmic drill; and the child learns from it, among many things certainly two: order, and the power of pleasant and harmonious action with others; A regiment cannot act in the field until its drill in the parade-ground is perfect; and in the same way, then, children are prepared for the nobler battle of life. Miss Shirreff wisely says: "The repression of selfishness is a leading object. Nothing in the child's whole training is for one alone; there is emulation, but no competition for rewards, and the children's temper is saved from irritation by the absence of all that souring influence that comes from impotent effort and straining over solitary tasks."

II. The second gift consists of a sphere, a cube, and a cylinder—all of wood. In looking at these the child becomes aware of strong contrasts, and has to employ his power of comparison. There are square

sides and round sides, lines and surfaces ; and a great deal of questioning comes into play, while a great deal of experience is stored up in the child regarding the differences between the qualities of these objects. The child lays up a stock of experiences which are the germs of geometrical truths ; and when these geometrical truths come to be presented to him, they are at once appropriated—they are not strange and new to him, they are only the reminiscences of an experience which is now part of the fruitful soil of his mind. Accurate observation, perpetual comparison, perception of relations, of likenesses and differences—these are the elements and rudimentary germ-points of scientific instruction.

III. The third gift is a cube, which is made up of eight smaller cubes. In this set of exercises the child has to count and recount, to separate and combine, to recombine into different wholes, to compare one whole with another whole ; to add to and to take from ; and, last of all—or, indeed, accompanying all this—to build and create actual things out of combinations of them. Not till he has done a thing several times is he called upon to describe its action in words ; and this is certainly the true order—the order of nature. A child has thousands of experi-

ences in the world long before he can say one word about them; but when, after all these experiences, he has once got the word, he never forgets it. At this stage, if not before it, comes in the creative effort of the child—an instinct which lies deep in the soul of every human being. The making of mud-pies is one of its beginnings: the building of a cathedral, the framing of a Cabinet, the making of a Constitution may be one of its consummations. Out of his small cubes he constructs a table, or a chair, a flight of steps, a chimney; and he learns to adapt means to ends, to notice similarities and differences, to produce symmetrical things; and all the while his mind is wholly engaged, firmly held, and deeply interested. He is interested, but not amused; for, indeed, he does not want to be amused. It is his frivolous elders who look for amusement; but a child is serious and intent, never frivolous or flighty. He has not yet been spoilt by the series of shallow excitements and irritations, to which we give the name of "the world." His activity has been brought into play—the activity of his hands, eyes, and mind; and his power of origination has also been pleasantly appealed to. The world is full of people who have not the courage to live their own lives,

who are original neither in action nor in thought; and it is highly probable that this arises from the tendency in schools to keep down independent activities in children, and the stern repression that often meets the sprouting out of any thought or action of their own.

IV. The fourth gift is a cube of the same size as the former one, and divided into the same number of pieces, but the pieces are of a different form. They are not squares, they are oblongs. Each piece has a length which is twice its breadth, and its breadth is twice its thickness. The child has now, under the guidance of the teacher, to set out on a new course of inquiry, which will lead him to new discoveries, and will put him in legitimate possession of a number of new names for things and relations.

In the fifth and sixth gifts the cubes are cut diagonally, so that the child becomes acquainted with acute angles, can measure these, combine them into right angles, and so on. Some of the small cubes are again cut into halves, and some into quarters. Thus the child learns to manipulate the fractions called halves and quarters; and in his play with these—a play which is kindly and quietly regulated—he learns what a fraction is, and how fractions go together to make up

wholes. It is in reference to arithmetic that the value of Froebel's training is—one cannot say greatest, but—most plainly seen. He creates experience before he gives names; he creates orderly experience before he gives rules; he has the child's mind held by a number of pleasant habits before he knows what they are: the child has his knowledge in a concrete form long before the abstract terms are demanded. The learner has, moreover, followed the sequence of nature; and hence, his knowledge being real experience and a part of himself, he can never forget it. He begins with things he can see and handle; he goes on to the pictures of these things; he proceeds to the symbols; and, last of all, he arrives at the merest indices. His experience is firmly based upon tangible arithmetic; he goes from that to visual arithmetic; and, best of all, he can perform any arithmetical operation in his mind. Thing, picture, symbol, sign—these are the four steps. Thus, when he comes to the ordinary school arithmetic, he finds he knows all about it—that it is an old familiar face; and like Mr. Jourdain, who had been speaking *prose* for forty years without knowing it, he has been acquainted with arithmetic from even before he could remember.

But I must not lead you to suppose for

a moment that Froebel's thought was simply a better introduction than what we had before to the so-called subjects of the schoolroom. What he aims at with his whole soul is to develop and call forth every power of the soul, mind, and body; and he holds that, in developing the powers of the young and growing body, he is also developing the powers of the young and growing soul.

Every kind of exercise, every kind of game, every kind of occupation, Froebel has set himself to devise and to think out for the benefit of the child. Besides all the devices by which he allures the child "to conform the outward shows of things to the desires of the mind," he has invented a large number of social games, one special characteristic of which is, that they set forth to the young mind events that occur daily in nature and in human society. Here are some examples, which I take from a very interesting and pleasant book, "A Visit to German Schools," by Professor Payne, pp. 46, 47, 48:—

"1. *The Horse and his Rider*.—One child represents the horse, and another, laying hold of the horse behind, follows him as the rider. They set off very merrily; the horse is fresh, but soon shows symptoms of weariness. The pace slackens. He steps in front of one of the children, who repre-

sents the hostler of an inn, gets a bait and a drink, and steps on vigorously again. Again, however, the pace becomes slower. He has cast a shoe. He stops at a smithy; the blacksmith comes forward and nails on a new one. The horse goes on again, and comes to the gate of a town, where the rider pays a toll. After a while the pair start for the homeward journey; the rider reaches his house, distributes presents that he has brought amongst his children, and receives their thanks. All is mirth and jollity."

"2. *The Seasons*.--One child is selected for each. To begin with, Spring stands in the middle of a ring formed by the rest. All lift up their hands and sing the song, 'Spring' (*Fruehlingslust*), to denote joy and satisfaction. Then Summer takes his place, wiping his heated brow. Haymaking begins, and the movements of the haymakers are imitated. Summer's song is sung amid rejoicings. Autumn comes next, and harvesting, and so forth, are represented. Then Winter succeeds, shivering, stamping with his feet, rubbing his hands. Then the four Seasons join hands, and dance prettily together; and lastly, all take part, waltzing with real grace in pairs. My heart, I confess, danced with them."

Besides all these gifts and games, come

what are called the "Occupations." I cannot enter upon any description of these; but I may at least name them—*Plaiting, Weaving, Cutting-out, Paper-folding, Mat-plaiting, Stick-laying, Drawing* (in a quadrangular net-work of small dimensions), *Freehand Drawing, Pricking, Sewing, Stick and Pea Work, Modelling in Clay*, and many others. Through all of them, though unknown to the little learners, there runs a thread of purpose—a high-road which leads to the development of some powers of the hand and eye, which powers are again related to powers of the soul and mind. Froebel thought that, along with manual dexterity, intelligence should go; along with the love of work, the love also of observing. But he saw very plainly that education and instruction had been overdone with books, and overlaid with the thoughts of other men; and that young and growing minds must be trained not only to think, but to act and work—not only to know but to produce. He observed that nature calls upon the child to use its hands incessantly in play; and that one of the greatest punishments you can inflict on a child is to forbid it the use of its hands, as, indeed, is still sometimes done even in infant schools. This perpetual desire for action on the part of the hand he harnessed to the car of education

—he enlisted in the work of instruction; and he did his utmost to train it to habits of order, neatness, method, and origination.

In all these apparently quite mechanical exercises, the pupil comes to discoveries of his own in the branching off of thought and observation, or he comes to them under the excitement of a judicious course of questioning, which may suggest, but which never allows itself to supersede the activity of the child's own mind by "telling." In learning to fold paper, for example, the child comes to see—to see and to find out for himself—that all the angles formed at the central point of the intersection are either four right angles or are equal to four right angles. When he has seen this as a reality, when he knows it as a fact, he will not be the less ready to grasp and to appropriate it when it is presented to him as a scientific truth.

Now, in the above sketch, I have only been able to touch upon a very few of the best sides of Froebel's system or education. But perhaps, even from this imperfect sketch, it may have become plain to you that Froebel, in his methods of education and instruction, appeals to more powers in the human frame than any previous educator; and that he called to his aid a larger number of phenomena in na-

ture, and of products of the human soul. He does not merely appeal to the mind, but to the soul and body also; he does not merely speak to the soul by words, but by the voices also of nature, by the art-works of artists, by the music of musicians, by the best and simplest in thought, in action, and in feeling that humanity has produced. And so he figured to himself, in his quiet and self-centred enthusiasm, the making of a great nation.

Let us look a little longer at the main features and the most living organs of this NEW EDUCATION.

1st, Froebel begins at the beginning, and calls forth the powers—or shows the mother how to call forth the powers—of the growing child.

2d, He trains the senses to accurate observation and perception, to accurate comparison—and hence to accurate thought.

3d, He educates the social powers and feelings, and trains the child to harmonious action with his fellow-creatures. Then he disarms the separative passion of pride, and heightens the power of the attractive emotion of love.

4th, He grafts the love of work on the innate love of play; and “in playful work and workful play,” he gives to the child a complete satisfaction for his powers and activities. Hence, it is the hand and eye

for which he provides the largest amount of training.

5th, He finds the appropriate food for the appropriate age. He notices what powers are in greatest activity at each time of life, and promotes in a pleasurable way the activity of these.

6th, He sees that the education of the individual must travel on the lines on which the education of the race has traveled.

7th, He sees that there is a unity "of development in all life, organic and inorganic." "The tiniest plant cannot be reared without regard to its dependence on the sun"; and so education is a process which depends for its success on a true recognition of the eternal laws of God. "We must hitch our wagon to a star"; it is the old bottled-up forces of the sun that now draw our railway trains; and the teaching even of the youngest and weakest child is regulated, and must be regulated, by cosmic law,

8th, Froebel trains the child (1) as a child of Nature, (2) as a member of human society, and (3) as a child of God.

9th, He gratifies the endless passion for hunting—for discovery. Each old truth is found out over again. The world is eternally young; and the childhood of the

world appears every hour, as well as every morning.

10th, He tries to satisfy the desire to make—to create.

11th, He trains to habits of neatness and order. Internal clearness of head may be one result of this. The prevailing modern intellectual disease is muddle-headedness.

✓ 12th, He promotes free and spontaneous action in every way he can think of. Thus he trains the will to both strength and freedom.

13th, He puts *words* in their right place both in moral and in mental education—that is, last of all.

Thus, we see that this *new education*, like all other good things in the world, is very old—as old as the everlasting hills. It aims at providing perpetual occupation for the limbs, the eyes, and the minds of the little learners—pleasant occupation—and such occupation as, having arisen out of the analysis of scientific ideas, leads up to them again by the most carefully-prepared graduation. Thus it is that the child's mind is not stupefied by ready-made ideas, or lulled by stale notions; that he rediscovers for himself what was discovered long ago—but is, for the new child, eternally fresh and new.

The most beautiful thing in the world is a young child ; the most difficult thing in the world is to educate him towards his high and, indeed, endless mission.



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